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was vouchsafed a vision *in writing* of his impending downfall. In the course of centuries this story must have been altered into a narrative of an event which took place in waking life, as we have it in Daniel. The Maccabean biblical author then no doubt changed the account according to his theology and incorporated it into his work as a tale bearing an instructive moral for Antiochus Epiphanes, against whose persecutions the entire book of Daniel was directed."

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### **Have We Outgrown the Gospel?**

The president's address at the last meeting of the American Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis is before the general reader in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Part I, 1903. Professor B. W. Bacon, D.D., of Yale Divinity School, gave the address upon the subject "Ultimate Problems of Biblical Science." Among other things he spoke of the error of supposing that modern progress has been such as to antiquate all past thought in the field of religion. He says: It is easy to overrate the difference made by a few centuries of additional knowledge and discovery, and hard to realize the maturity of thought of two thousand years ago and upwards on the fundamental ideas of morality and religion. Disencumber the teaching of the New Testament of that which its own authors, if they lived today, would admit to belong not to the substance but only to the form, and New Testament thought represents, not the past, but the present; not an incomplete stage in spiritual evolution, but the completest and most perfect within our observation. We must admit the principle of evolution; we gladly avail ourselves of it in the spiritual creation; but we must beware of assuming that because intellectual progress along certain lines has been comparatively rapid during the last twenty-five centuries, the moral and religious consciousness has outgrown the stage of eighteen hundred years ago. It might not be scientific to say: "The moral and religious consciousness of man reached its limit in Jesus of Nazareth. His conception of man in his relation to God and his fellow-man, under the forms of sonship and brotherhood, represents absolute religion." It might be better, with the fourth evangelist, to give full swing to the principle of spiritual progress, and say: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." Only, while geology and astrophysics combine to unroll before us the inconceivable æons which mark the stages of physical evolution, let us not make the mistake of imagining the greater spiritual creation going on about us to be the product of a few centuries. In

the real principles of his teaching, Jesus belongs to our own time. Christian thought is modern thought. Religious literature in general must be classed as either preliminary or as subsidiary to that which reveals his consciousness of God and man. There are foothills nearer and more remote, on this side and on that; but it bespeaks a loss of perspective, and exaggeration of that which owes its seeming greatness to mere proximity, to talk of subsequent religious or philosophical systems as if they evinced a spiritual consciousness comparable with this great fact of the spiritual creation. To imagine that the literature in which Jesus' consciousness of man's relation to God is embodied may lose its authority and uniqueness, may suffer eclipse under the brightness of some modern luminary, unless we continue to deck it out with the attributes of a mechanical inerrancy and up-to-dateness, is to prove one's self in the sophomoric stage of appreciation.

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#### **General Results of Historical Criticism.**

In his latest book, *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, J. Estlin Carpenter, joint editor with the late G. Harford-Battersby of the Oxford *Hexateuch*, thus sums up the situation resulting from the application of the historical method to the study of the Bible: The principle of interpreting the Bible "like any other book" at once brings into view the resemblances which unite it to other deposits of ancient faith, and the differences which divide it from them. On the one hand, we are made aware of its multiform character. Its contents are not all of one order. The Old Testament, for example, contains specimens of many kinds of literature. History and lyric, the ancient legend, the folk-tale, the parable, the lofty oracle of the prophet, the religious debate, all find a place within its pages. The recognition of diversities of content and style has fixed attention on the processes by which the books have reached their present form and driven the student to investigate the materials out of which they have been composed. This has again and again resulted in profound modifications alike of our historic view and of our theological beliefs. Theories once ardently cherished have been overthrown. Conceptions that had exerted immense influence for centuries can no longer be maintained. Some doctrines — such as that of eternal punishment — have been widely abandoned in silence; others, like that of vicarious atonement, have been so transformed, even in fifty years, as to be hardly recognizable.

On the other hand, the true value of the Bible has been enhanced.